

FIR-317/9085-73

I

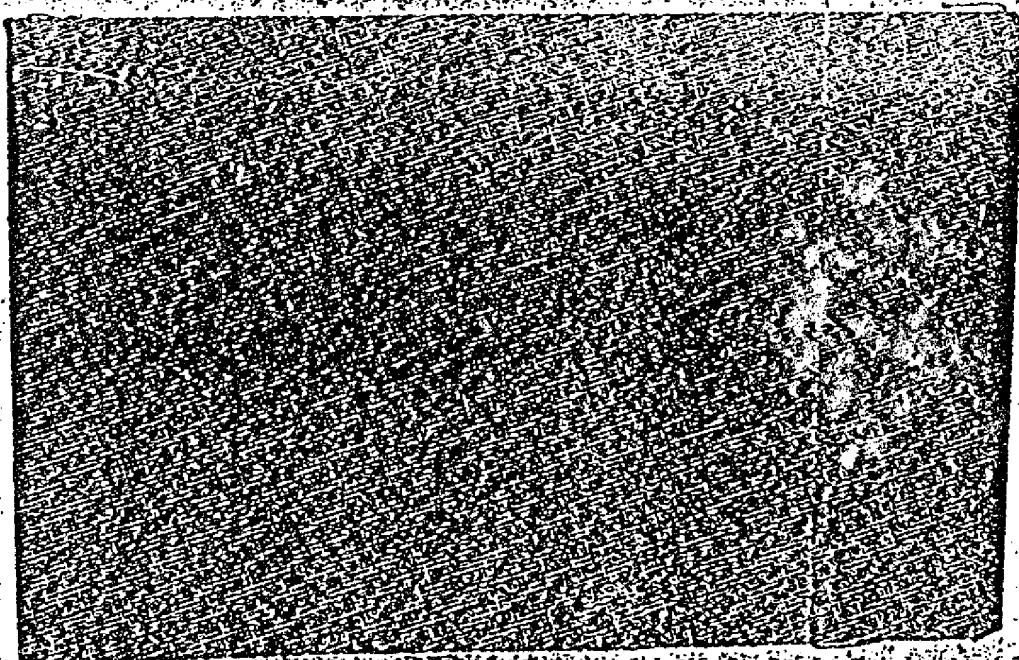
COUNTRY LAOS

DOI 27 MARCH 1971 - EARLY APRIL 1971

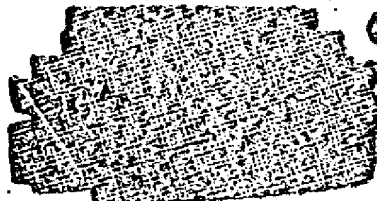
SUBJECT SIGHTING OF DOWNING OF EIGHT U.S. HELICOPTERS
AND DEATH OF FOUR U.S. PILOTS IN SAVANNAKHET
PROVINCE, LAOS

ACD

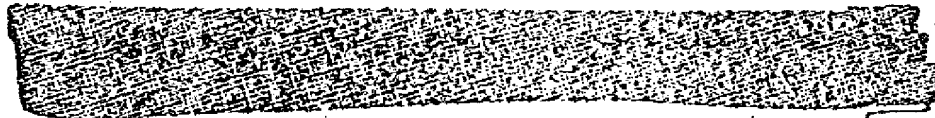
SOURCE



E
A



I

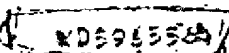


A

1. ABOUT 1200 HOURS ON 27 MARCH 1971, 

A

~~RECEIVED 1200 HOURS ON 27 MARCH 1971, 1200 HOURS ON 27 MARCH 1971~~

~~RECEIVED 1200 HOURS ON 27 MARCH 1971, 1200 HOURS ON 27 MARCH 1971~~  (IN SAVANNAKHET PROVINCE) BY A UNIT OF THE

NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMY (NVA) 591ST ARTILLERY REGIMENT. THE
HELICOPTERS WERE BRINGING IN VIETNAMESE ARMY (ARVN) REINFORCEMENTS
TO HILL 500. THE EIGHT HELICOPTERS APPROACHED HILL 500 FROM
THE DIRECTION OF ROUTE 9. THREE WERE HIT BY ANTIAIRCRAFT
ARTILLERY FIRE AS THEY DESCENDED TOWARD THE HILL; THE OTHER
FIVE IMMEDIATELY STARTED FIRING ROCKETS AT THE ANTIAIRCRAFT
ARTILLERY SITE AT THE BASE OF THE HILL BUT FAILED TO MAKE A
HIT. ~~SEVEN MINUTES LATER, FOUR MORE HELICOPTERS WERE HIT BY~~
ARTILLERY FIRE. THE REMAINING HELICOPTER FLEW OFF IN A
SOUTHERLY DIRECTION TOWARD ROUTE 9, BUT RETURNED A FEW MINUTES
LATER. IT WAS SHOT DOWN AS IT WAS DESCENDING. ALL EIGHT
~~RECEIVED 1200 HOURS ON 27 MARCH 1971, 1200 HOURS ON 27 MARCH 1971~~ THEY WERE
ALL HIT BY CHINESE SINGLE BARREL 37MM ANTIAIRCRAFT ARTILLERY
FIRE AT AN ALTITUDE BETWEEN 700 AND 1000 METERS. THE

EA

A



A

[REDACTED] I

LEADER OF THE 25TH ENGINEERING BATTALION, TOLD [REDACTED] THAT A
THE AMERICAN WAS BURIED IN TALOY SLOPE NEAR THE HOSPITAL.
HE WAS ABOUT 25 YEARS OLD, ABOUT 1.80 METERS TALL, AND
WEIGHED ABOUT 90 KILOS. HE HAD A LIGHT COMPLEXION, A LONG
FACE, AND SHORT HAIR. FASTENED TO EACH OF HIS ANKLES WAS
A KNIFE IN A BLACK LEATHER SCABBARD. [REDACTED] TOOK THE FOLLOWING A
ITEMS FROM HIM: AN AUTOMATIC PISTOL, A ROUND WRISTWATCH
WITH A BLACK FACE AND A BROWN LEATHER WATCHBAND, A ZIPPO
LIGHTER, TWO PACKS OF CIGARETTES, AND A GOLD RING WITH A BLUE
STONE THAT HAD A GOLD, HEARTSHAPED, METAL EMBLEM IN THE CENTER E
OF IT. [REDACTED] COMMENT: [REDACTED] WAS SHOWN BOTH VOLUMES OF A
PRISONERS OF WAR AND MISSING IN ACTION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA BUT
WAS NOT ABLE TO MAKE AN IDENTIFICATION.)

3. WHEN [REDACTED] PLATOON RETURNED TO HILL 500 ABOUT TEN DAYS A
LATER, HE SAW ABOUT 15 ~~DRIVE~~ ~~DRIVE~~ MARKED WITH 40 X 30
CENTIMETER SHEETS OF METAL AT THE FOOT OF HILL 500. THE
WRITING ON THE MARKERS WAS IN YELLOW PAINT. ALL OF THE GRAVE
MARKERS HAD "HIGH POINT 500" PAINTED ON THEM. THREE OF THE
MARKERS HAD THE NUMBER "25" PAINTED ON THEM. THE 16TH

DESIGNATION FOR "U.S. FLYING PIRATES" AND [REDACTED] THOUGHT
THESE WERE THE GRAVES OF THE THREE U.S. PILOTS HE HAD SEEN.
VIETNAMESE NAMES WERE WRITTEN ON THE OTHER MARKERS AND [REDACTED]
THOUGHT THESE WERE THE GRAVES OF THE ARVN SOLDIERS KILLED
IN THE CRASHES.

4. [REDACTED] COMMENT: THE JOINT CASUALTY RESOLUTION CENTER
(JCRC) EVALUATED THE REPORT AS FOLLOWS: INFORMATION AS
PRESENTED PRECLUDES ANY DEFINITE CORRELATION. THE FOLLOWING
FACTORS RESTRICT CORRELATION EFFORTS: (A) JCRC RECORDS
INDICATE THAT DURING 1971 THE U.S. LOST A TOTAL OF TWELVE
HELICOPTERS IN LAOS; NO CH-40'S WERE AMONG THE LOSSES.
(B) ALL LOSSES OCCURRED APPROXIMATELY TEN MILES SOUTH OF THE
REPORTED LOCATION ALONG ROUTE NINET; AND (C) THE U.S. NEVER
LOST EIGHT HELICOPTERS AT ANY GIVEN TIME AND/OR AT ANY ONE
LOCATION. JCRC RECORDS REVEAL THAT ON 30 JUNE 1970, MAJOR
JOHN W. G O E G L E I N (JCRC NO. 6631), CAPTAIN LEROY
S C H A N E B E R G (JCRC NO. 5766), MSGT PAUL L. J E N K I N S
(JCRC NO. 5498), E-5 MICHAEL F. D E A N (JCRC NO. 5354), AND
E-5 MARVIN E. B E L L (JCRC NO. 5218) WERE FLYING IN USAF
HH-53C RESCUE HELICOPTER (JOLLY GREEN GIANT) OVER EASTERN

[REDACTED]

H

LAOS IN VICINITY OF BAN LANGH (XD 615596), WHICH IS APPROXIMATELY TWO MILES NORTHEAST OF REPORTED LOCATION, WHEN THEIR AIRCRAFT WAS HIT AND DOWNED BY AAA FIRE. THE INDIVIDUALS ARE LISTED AS KIA/BNR (BODY NOT RECOVERED). NO DEFINITE CORRELATION CAN BE MADE DUE TO NON-AVAILABILITY OF IDENTIFYING DATA AT THIS HOS.)

5. FIELD DISSEM: DEFENSE ATTACHE FOR JCRC REPRESENTATIVE IN SAIGON: SENT TO CINCPAC (FOR CINCPAC AND POLAD ONLY) USSAG AND

[REDACTED]

H

[REDACTED]

H